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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**TAJIKISTAN**

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## PRESS RELEASE

### LIBRARIANS SHARE IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPING TAJIK LIBRARIES

**Dushanbe, Tajikistan.** Library Managers from Tajikistan returned on November 13, 2008, from three-week internships in the State of Nebraska in the United States. Participants of the USAID-sponsored Community Connections Library Management program lived with American families, met with U.S. library professionals, and exchanged ideas on various issues relating to the library sphere. Participants visited a number of public and private libraries, and associations of libraries in Lincoln, Nebraska and Washington D.C. In Washington D.C., participants toured the largest library in the world, the Library of Congress. During the training component of the program, participants learned best practices in managing information and how to share it with the public, ideas which they will utilize in their practical work with various libraries in Tajikistan.

The participants also appreciated the cultural aspects of the program; in particular their home stays with American host families. "Living with American families is a valuable contribution to our understanding and appreciation of people of the United States", stated Rustam Yarbabaev, Director of the National University Library. The participants shared their history, culture, and traditions with their American host families and friends. This helped many Americans better understand Tajikistan and its people.

The USAID Community Connections Program brings citizens of the United States and Tajikistan together to address common professional challenges while expanding their social and cultural understanding. As the opportunities for cultural and professional exchanges expand, the business and professional communities of both countries will become more integrated, to the mutual benefit of the American people and the people of Tajikistan. The USAID Community Connections Program offers community-based, three-to-five week practical trainings in the United States for business and professional organization leaders from Tajikistan.

The Community Connections Program is one of the many assistance projects implemented in Tajikistan by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on behalf of the American people. Since 1993 the American people through USAID have provided about \$300 million in assistance programs that support economic growth, democratic institutions, health care, and education systems of Tajikistan.